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grateful that the editors have reduced the scope of the Notes to that which is absolutely essential. Would it not have been advisable, however, to have given, either in the Notes or at the close of each subject, the title of the author and treatise from which that portion of the reader was drawn? Without doubt many students and instructors will desire to have this information, especially as the extract may awaken a desire to read the entire work.

In conclusion, the impression may be recorded, that these Science Readers are destined, alone or (better) in conjunction with each other, to supersede all similar works which have yet appeared in this country.

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NOTES ON DONNE.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—K. Pietsch in his notes on Schelling's *Book of Elizabethan Lyrics* in a former number (vol. xi, 1896) of your journal, explains Donne's line "Get with child a mandrake root," by quoting, from Delius, Reed's citation of Bulleine concerning the mandrake, "without the death of some living thing it cannot be drawn out of the earth to man's use." The writer adds,

"It would undoubtedly have been unheard of, and is, therefore, ranked as an impossibility by the poet, to get a mandrake root with a child,"

that is, by means of a child.

Donne's uses of the mandrake elsewhere (*Elegy on the Death of Prince Henry*, l. 53 f., *The Progress of the soul*, ll. 131-170) not only add no probability to this explanation, but one example proves it to be incorrect. Here Eve, searching for a remedy to apply to her cradled child whose

"... moist red eyes

Had never shutt, nor slept, since it saw light,"

pulls up the plant without harm,

"Poppie she knew, she knew the mandrake's might,
And tore up both, and so cooled her child's blood."

The expression "gett with chylde" is rather to be taken in its usual sense of to cause to be-

come pregnant; the reason to "gett with chylde a mandrake roote" is used as an example of the impossible may be seen from Mr. Grosart's note to line 131 of *The Progress of the Soul* (Donne, in Fuller Worthies Library, i, 92).

Here one is reminded that the roots of the plant occasionally presented a resemblance to the human figure, and Parkinson in *Theat. Botan.* (1640) is quoted as follows:

"and, therefore, those idle formes of the mandrakes and womandrakes, as they are foolishly so called, which have been exposed to publick view, both in ours and other lands and countries, are utterly deceitful, being the work of cunning knaves, only to get mony by their forgery."

Mr. Grosart also notes

"It would seem by his 'Paradisus' that Parkinson tried to get the city magistrates to forbid the exhibition of these indecent forgeries, ... as in the later cases of Anatomical Museums."

The description of the mandrake in *The Progress of the Soul*, ll. 141-150 accords well with this suggestion while no mention in Donne's poetry substantiates the former explanation, which, too, is less in harmony with the spirit of Donne's work than that now suggested.

As a parallel to Donne's somewhat celebrated compass metaphor (*Obsequies of Lord Harrington*, l. 107 f. *Upon partinge from His Mistris*, l. 24 f.) the lines of Carew are probably not unfamiliar:

"You are the compass; and I never sound
Beyond your circle, neither can I show
Aught, but what first expressed is in you."
To Celia, on Love's Ubiquity, l. 35 f.

and

"For, like a Compass, on your love
One foot is fixed, and cannot move:
Th' other may follow the blind guide
Of giddy Fortune, but not slide
Beyond your service, nor dare venture
To wander far from you the centre."
Excuse of Absence-Cosens' MS., l. 3 f.

I have not, however, seen attention called to the use of the same figure in a quotation sometimes made from Omar Khayyam:

"You and I are the image of a pair of compasses; though we have two heads we have one body; when we have fixed the centre for our circle, we bring our heads together at the end."

The familiar figure of "the enchantresse Honor," who guards the maiden in Donne (*The Dampie*, l. 12, *Opinion*, l. 45), who was known to Carew as "The Giant Honour, that keeps cowards out," (*A Rapture*, ll. 3, 124 f. 145, *The Mournful Parting of two Lovers*, l. 29, f.), and known similarly to Cowley (*Mistress*), and to Sidney (concluding song in *Astrophel and Stella*) may find, if not a source, at least an interesting parallel, in Tasso's *Ode to the Golden Age*.

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NOTE ON A PASSAGE IN *Julius Cæsar*.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—Much unnecessary trouble has been given to the commentators by the following passage from *Julius Cæsar*, Act i, Scene ii, line 85:

"If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honour in one eye and death i' the other,
And I will look on both indifferently,
For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honour more than I fear death."

Of this Johnson says (I quote from the note in Rolfe's school edition):

"When Brutus first names Honour and Death, he calmly declares them indifferent; but, as the image kindles in his mind, he sets Honour above life."

Coleridge adds:

"Warburton would read *death for both*; but I prefer the old text. There are here three things—the public good, the individual Brutus' honour, and his death. The latter two so balanced each other, that he could decide for the first by equipoise; nay,—the thought growing,—that honour had more weight than death."

The difficulty which these critics have felt seems to have been occasioned by their failure to perceive that Brutus is here punning on the word *honor*, which means not only personal integrity, but also high rank, dignity, distinction. In this latter sense we find it, for example, in the *Merchant of Venice*, Act ii, Scene ix, line 42:

"O, that estates, degrees and offices
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer! . . .
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd
From the true seed of honour! and how much honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times
To be new-varnish'd."

A score of further examples might be cited, but I content myself with one from *Cymbeline* Act iii, Scene i, l. 70:

"Thy Cæsar knighted me; my youth I spent
Much under him; of him I gather'd honour;
Which he to seek of me, again perforce,
Behoves me keep at utterance."

According to the interpretation here advanced, Brutus meaning might be stated thus: "In matters concerning the public good, I will take indifferently high position or death, for I love my personal integrity more than I fear death."

The probability of this explanation is increased by the fact that the same play upon the word *honor* is found in another of Shakespeare's dramas, *Love's Labors Lost*, Act iii, Scene i, line 170:

"Meantime receive such welcome at my hand
As honour without breach of honour may
Make tender of to thy true worthiness."

I have been unable to find either of these puns upon *honor* in Wurth's *Wortspiel bei Shakpere*.

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GERMAN LITERATURE.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—On the first of January, 1897, there appeared as Number 5 of Vol. 11 of *Progress*, a pamphlet on the *History of German Literature* written by myself, which, owing to no fault of mine, contains serious mistakes, against which I must here publicly protest.

I had reason to believe that my MS. was in good hands. I, therefore, left for Europe, thinking everything would be done satisfactorily, but find that, first of all, most confusing misprints have crept in, and secondly, that selections have been inserted that I never suggested, and others that I did suggest were inserted in the wrong places.

I do not wish to trespass upon the space of your journal by giving a list of all the ludicrous misprints that disfigure the pamphlet; most of them will be readily detected by your readers. In regard to the subject matter, I will content myself with saying that I disown absolutely everything (including the pictures) in the treatise, except the text and the abstracts from the *Edda*, *Parzival*, and the *Nibelungenlied*. I must, however, say that on p. 298, between § 4 and § 5, a passage has been left out, and hence the sense has been blurred.

I hereby most vigorously protest against the treatment I have received at the hands of the editors of *Progress*, and add that I regard the pamphlet as it now is, as dangerous to beginners.

CAMILLO VON KLENZE.

Munich.